

## **Accessory Dwelling Units**

### **Two (2) complete plan sets will be required with the following information:**

- 1) Building Permit Application, available at [www.elpasotexas.gov](http://www.elpasotexas.gov)
- 2) Property address
- 3) Total square footage for all:
  - a) Living areas
  - b) Garages & carports
  - c) Covered porches, patios & balconies
- 4) Dimensioned site plan drawn to scale. The site plan drawing requires the following information:
  - a) The property lines
  - b) All setback lines
  - c) All utility easements
  - d) All proposed and/or existing structures on the site
  - e) Sidewalks, driveways, parkways & curbs dimensions; concrete aprons
  - f) On-site ponding requirements (if applicable)
- 5) Architectural scale drawing of the structure, which shows the following:
  - a) Floor plan which indicates:
    - 1) Dimensions & identification of all rooms & spaces
    - 2) Location, size and types of all windows & doors
    - 3) Smoke and Carbon monoxide detector locations
    - 4) Residential fire sprinkler systems if required
    - 5) All bedroom window sills height
  - b) Roof framing plans indicating all beams, rafters, trusses & columns
  - c) Floor framing plans indicating all joists, beams & columns
  - d) If using trusses, a truss package sealed by a professional engineer shall be included
  - e) Foundation plans indicating the type of foundation and footing details
  - f) Typical exterior & interior wall sections
  - g) Exterior elevations showing the front, right, left & rear of structure
  - h) Architectural drawing of any stairs, railings, interior walls, fireplaces, rock walls & retaining walls
- 6) International Energy Code Compliance report. Compliance can be shown by using the REScheck form that is available at [www.energycodes.gov](http://www.energycodes.gov)

### **Standard Accessory Building Rules 20.10.030**

- 1) Residential accessory buildings shall not exceed one story or fifteen feet in height and must be located in a rear yard or in a side yard if minimum required side setbacks are maintained, except as permitted in [Section 20.10.035](#) (Accessory Dwelling Units). Condensing units for central air conditioning systems shall be no closer than five feet to a lot line.

- 2) Any residential accessory building closer than five feet to a main building shall be considered as part of the main building, shall be located within the buildable area required for a main building, and shall be subject to all applicable restrictions for the main building.
- 3) Detached residential accessory buildings shall be located not less than sixty feet from the front lot line, a minimum of five feet from the main building, and shall comply with the side and side street yard requirements. No rear yard setback shall be required, except for accessory dwelling units as permitted in [Section 20.10.035](#)
- 4) The gross floor area of all combined detached residential accessory buildings on a lot shall not exceed the more restrictive of the following, except that one building with up to four hundred square feet shall be permitted:
  - a. Fifty percent of the gross floor area of the main building; or
  - b. Forty percent of the area of the rear yard.
- 5) A residential private garage or other accessory building may be connected to the main building by a breezeway or connected by a fence or wall up to six feet in height, provided that the breezeway shall not exceed an overall width of five feet and shall be a minimum of seventy-five percent open to the outside on both sides.
- 6) Residential accessory buildings shall be built concurrently with or after the construction of the main building and shall be used only as permitted by this Code.
- 7) Where a residential garage entrance is from an alley, the structure must be located at least five feet from the property line.
- 8) In residential, apartment and special districts where community refuse containers are provided, these shall be completely screened from view by fences or walls and have a gate which can be latched open.

### **Accessory Dwelling Units 20.10.035**

#### **Detached accessory dwelling units in residential zoning districts shall comply with the following:**

- 1) The property owner must occupy either the principal unit or the accessory dwelling unit as their permanent residence. An owner of a property containing an accessory dwelling unit who is absent for a period of one year or less may rent the owner's unit as well as the second unit during the temporary absence.
- 2) Only one ADU is permitted on a lot with a detached single-family dwelling. ADUs are not permitted on lots with a duplex or multi-family units.
- 3) The minimum lot area is five thousand five hundred square feet.
- 4) If the lot is designated for on-site ponding, the maximum lot coverage, including all buildings and impervious surfaces, is fifty percent.
- 5) ADU shall not exceed eight hundred square feet of gross floor area, except that for lots containing eight thousand square feet or more, the ADU shall not exceed one thousand two hundred square feet.
- 6) ADU shall not contain more than one bedroom.
- 7) ADU shall comply with all building code requirements for a dwelling unit, including but not limited to, heating and cooling, cooking and bathroom facilities.

- 8) ADU shall be located a minimum of ten feet from any property line, except that when the rear property line abuts an alley with a minimum ROW of twenty feet, the rear setback for an ADU may be reduced to zero feet; and when the rear property line abuts an alley with ROW less than twenty feet, the rear setback for an ADU may be reduced to five feet, or less if approved by the traffic engineer.
- 9) Vehicular access to the ADU is permitted from an abutting alley if on-site parking is provided for the ADU.
- 10) The height of the ADU shall not exceed the height of the principal unit.
- 11) Windows shall not be permitted on the wall of an ADU that is within ten feet of the property line abutting a residential use, if the ADU is taller than one story or fifteen feet, unless a minimum fifteen feet buffer of privacy trees (see approved tree list) are planted at fifteen feet on center along the side and/or rear property lines adjacent to the ADU.
- 12) ADUs shall resemble the principal unit in scale, material and color. Roof pitch, siding material and color shall match the principal unit.
- 13) Windows shall be similar to the principal unit in the following ways: Type of window, trim style, proportions.

**Attached accessory dwelling units are permitted when they comply with the following:**

- 1) Only one ADU is permitted on a lot with a single-family dwelling. ADUs are not permitted on lots with a duplex or multi-family units.
- 2) The minimum lot area is five thousand five hundred square feet.
- 3) The ADU shall not exceed eight hundred square feet of gross floor area except that for lots containing eight thousand square feet or more, the ADU shall not exceed one thousand two hundred square feet.
- 4) The ADU shall not contain more than one bedroom.
- 5) The ADU shall comply with all building code requirements for a dwelling unit, including but not limited to, heating and cooling, cooking and bathroom facilities.
- 6) The ADU shall comply with all yard standards of the zoning district.
- 7) A separate entrance shall be provided for the ADU.
- 8) Vehicular access to the ADU is permitted from an abutting alley if on-site parking is provided for the ADU.
- 9) The height of the ADU shall not exceed the height of the principal unit.
- 10) ADUs shall resemble the principal unit in scale, material and color. Roof pitch, siding material and color shall match the principal unit.
- 11) Windows shall be similar to the principal unit in the following ways: type of window, trim style, proportions.

For help in obtaining information or to contact the Building Permit Division, please call (915) 212-0085 or visit our website at: <http://www.elpasotexas.gov/planning-and-inspections>